

6 *Sorns Coffee House*
A *hist. of Germany V. 7.*
LETTER

By, FROM AN *Subscription*
OFFICER

IN THE
ARMY of the ALLIES:

CONTAINING,

No. 229

An Authentic Account of the most remarkable
Events, that have lately happened there; particularly,
The RESIGNATION of the EARL of S—R, and
PRINCE CHARLES's passing the RHINE.

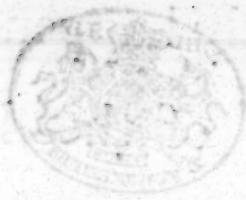


L O N D O N:

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LETTER
OF THE
ARMY
OF THE
UNITED STATES



An Authentic Account
of the
The Restoration
of the
Prisoners of War

By
Lieut. Genl. C. I. Smith
(1864)

A L E T T E R

O N T H E

Resignation of the F I E L D - M A R S H A L E. of S — R, &c.

Worms, Sept. 17, 1743. N.S.

BY this time, my friend, you will have received the surprizing news of the E. of S — r's resignation; surprizing without doubt it must be to you, since even here it amazes every body. Yesterday seven-night he gave orders for disposing of his equipage, and in a very few days he proposes to return to *England*. His Lordship, I am so used to it, that I was going to call him Excellency, is in as good health and spirits as can possibly be expected, considering that he is above seventy, and that he has mostly lived in courts or camps, where grey hairs are seldom seen. One thing must be allow'd him, that he was absolutely free from the testy humours which render old people disagreeable. He is without dispute, not only one of the ablest and politest men of the age, but at the same time one of the most chearful; always easy of address, always desirous of obliging, and yet affecting nothing of popularity. In short, from the time he arrived in the army he was the darling of the officers, and the delight of the private men, who revered him as their father, and who lov'd him as their friend.

You may depend upon it, that this is not a picture drawn at hazard, a character sketch'd in a hurry, or a representation dictated by prejudice; you have friends enough who have left the army lately, and who, I believe to a man, will justify what I have said. The nobleman of whom I am speaking had none of that lordly haughtiness which disgusts gentlemen so much. He was the easiest man alive, and made it his business to make every body else so. So kind to all his officers that he frequently prevented their wishes, so generous that he thought himself the only person over-paid, so inclined to do good offices, that no body thought it an excuse, when he declared, that to serve them was out of his power.

It was his lordship's peculiar felicity, that he reconciled the command of a *North Briton* to all the *English* officers, who admired in his Lordship that steadiness of temper and nice regard to merit, which he shewed upon all occasions, and that frankness with which he did justice to every man's performances and abilities. This is of great consequence in a general, whose partiality may not only be fatal to many private people, but to the publick; of this however he was never suspected, and to his honour be it spoken, as he assumed, so he has laid down his command, with universal approbation.

I dare say by this time you want to know the cause of his resignation, and I don't doubt that the best part of the world are, in this respect, of your opinion. Give me leave however to say, that this is a very nice point, and ought to be handled with great circumspection. On the one hand, it cannot be supposed

that a man of my Lord S——'s rank and reputation would resign without a reason, or without a good reason; and on the other, you will readily apprehend, that this reason, whatever it was, he did not communicate to every body. If you desire to know what is commonly said on the subject, I think there is no crime in telling you. A man will be scarce suspected of flattering even a peer out of place, and as his Lordship was not discarded, I see no great harm there is in telling the truth.

There had been for some time a jealousy that his Lordship was not very well pleas'd; some assign one reason, some another. It was thought a little extraordinary that he had the title of Commander in chief so long before he had a regiment, but I do not believe this made any great impression on his Lordship, who is naturally very disinterested, and the farthest in the world from desiring a multiplicity of posts; I believe too that this matter came to be talked of in the army chiefly thro' the enquiries made by foreigners, who were continually asking, which is the General's regiment? Where are the Field-Marshal's own corps? And when they were told he had none, they were wont to express a great surprize, as this was a thing by no means agreeable to their discipline.—— This however could not be the cause of his resigning, since his Lordship has had a regiment——for some time.

Other people fancied that he was a little piqued at seeing no notice taken of him in some accounts of the battle of *Dettingen*, in which without doubt, he had as great a share as any officer of his rank ought to have. He gave his orders with great calmness and intrepidity, and led on the first line to their last charge, when they beat the third line of *French* foot, and thereby determined the dispute. His Lordship however was known to have so little regard for gazette reputation, that it can scarce obtain credit, that such omissions as these should give him any considerable uneasiness, much less operate so strongly, and at so great a distance of time. He knew very well, that nothing of this sort could affect his character, that the army and his royal master were perfectly satisfied, he did all that could be expected from a brave and experienc'd officer, and that his courage and conduct contributed not a little to the defeat of the enemy, and to the glories of that memorable day. His Lordship indeed, upon all occasions, attributed, as it was his duty, every thing to the King his master, who without flattery deserved it, and whose intrepidity on that occasion can never be sufficiently extoll'd.

There are a third sort of people who seem to say, that he was distast'd at some foreign officers disputing his orders; this I believe you will have transmitted to you in *England* as the principal motive, but if you consider it strictly, and weigh well the absurdity of any officer in *British* pay disputing the orders of the Commander in chief of the *British* troops, you will know what to think of it, without any comment of mine. His Lordship is certainly a man of nice honour, and in that respect, of quick resentment, but then, if any thing like this really happened, he knew where to seek redress. All then that we know with certainty is, that he had upon the 6th instant a conference of an hour and a quarter at the head quarters, and that at his return he dismiss'd the centinels at his door, order'd his equipage to be dispos'd of, and declared his intention of returning to *England*. He had his reasons no doubt for this conduct, and we cannot doubt of their being good ones, since he had permission given him to resign. We know that in like cases other officers of less rank have been prevailed upon to change their resolutions, and therefore we have no room to question, that his Lordship's were well founded to admit of his departing from them, which, for the sake of the service, he would otherwise certainly have done.

As to his age, and infirmities, which is a turn commonly given to it, we cannot lay much stress upon them for these reasons, his Lordship does not appear to be much broken by the fatigues he had lately endured; and with respect to his

his age, this is so far from disqualifying him, that it rather recommends him. *M. Villars* and *P. Eugene* were very old when they made their last campaigns, and no body ever question'd the abilities of either. It is not expected that an officer of such high rank should be so brisk and vigorous as a partizan, it is sufficient if he is able to mount on horseback on great occasions, and to give his orders with dignity and presence of mind. How little bodily abilities have to do with the business of a Commander in chief, appears from a very late and a very illustrious instance, I mean the retreat from *Prague*, which was conducted by a general sick, and deprived of the use of his limbs, and who thro' that terrible march was not able to stir out of his litter. That wise Princess *Q. Elizabeth* was wont to order the Lord Treasurer *Burleigh*, who was much troubled with the gout, to sit in her presence; for my Lord, said she, it is not for your legs, but your head that we esteem you. While a man preserves that, he will be always fit to command an army, as old Marshal *Rantzau* actually did, when he had lost a leg, an arm, and was otherwise disabled. He survived to his Lordship's age, and merited that celebrated epitaph; *Here lies M. Rantzau, who died with nothing whole but his heart.*

I must take the liberty of saying, that there are two things which will make the loss of this noble Earl much regretted. The first, his leaving his retirement immediately when the affairs of his country demanded it, without making terms or bargains. He was a man above those sort of things, as much as he was incapable of raising a private fortune out of publick appointments. He lov'd his country and was ready to testify that love in whatever way he was called to it. If he affected magnificence it was to do honour to those he serv'd, his expences were inconvenient only to himself; he had nothing of party in him, and never thought of enriching himself when in favour, or obtaining mighty things from his weight in an opposition. On a change of measures he chang'd his conduct, ~~came heartily into that scheme which has given a new face to the affairs of~~ *Europe*, and distinguish'd himself in *Holland*, *Flanders*, here and every where else, as a warm friend to liberty and the common cause, and an open enemy to that false and intriguing court, which is the sole source of the troubles of *Europe*.

The other cause of our concern at his retiring is, the terror his very name imprinted on the *French*; they knew him, they knew his abilities, his sentiments and his spirit, as well or better than we. They knew him by experience, when he was ambassador at their court, in the time of the late Regent, in that critical conjuncture, when a man of great capacity might have been excus'd if he had met with less success than the *E. of S—* did. He behaved at that court as a *British* minister ought to behave; he spoke, he acted, he lived in a manner superior to all the ministers there; this was confess'd at home and abroad, and the effects of it were very visible; he did not ask but command favours, yet he put on no haughty airs; his Lordship did not bully the court, or behave like a *Broglie*, no, he carried his point upon all occasions by dint of his personal character; the Regent knew that he could not be impos'd on, and that he would not be ill treated. This gave him that credit from the beginning of his ministry, which to the end of it he maintain'd: his memorials were always received with respect, and it is a truth notorious to all *Europe*, that while he resided at *Paris*, we were thought to give law to that power which has affected to give law to all others ever since. We need not wonder therefore, that the *French* were so apprehensive of this man, no body ever thought that nation fools, and there needed no great penetration to infer, that he who controuled their court in time of peace, was most likely to beat their Generals in time of war.

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Besides it was as generally known, that no man living was better acquainted with the views, interests and manner of acting among the *French*, or with the situation of their country than he. It is generally agreed, that his Lordship had formed a scheme, last year, of penetrating into *France* by the way of *Luxemburgh*; and those who are best versed in military science, seem to be of opinion, that on this side *France* lies most open, and may be soonest and most desperately hurt. M. *Seckendorf* who commands the emperor's army, got a great deal of reputation by barely attempting it, and if he had been furnish'd with proper magazines, his in all probability would have been more than an attempt. Lord S——'s scheme however was better laid, if it could then have been brought to bear, and the very terror of this has made the *French* uneasy ever since. Hence it is that they represent him, upon all occasions, as a man of implacable resentment, as the capital and avow'd enemy of their country, one determined to do them all the hurt he could, or to express it in their own phrase *ce tison de l'enfer le comte de Stair*, i. e. that whisp of hell the earl of *Stair*.

It is natural to believe that such a man's retiring at this season, will be very welcome news to an enemy, and especially to an enemy who have such notions of him as they are known to have. It was for this reason, that I observed the motives of his retiring must have been very strong, otherwise he could not himself have thought it proper, or if he had, it would not have been thought so in another place. But with us who are not acquainted with these reasons, they cannot you know have any weight. We reason only from what we perceive, and from the appearances things have to us, those who see farther may judge better, but no man can be blam'd for judging for himself by his own lights. We have already had a great loss in an old experienced officer, who fell in the field of battle, I mean general *Clayton*, whose death was severely revenged upon the *French*; as I hope we shall shortly have an opportunity of paying them in the like coin for the retreat of the Earl of S—. This is the true way of a soldier's venting his passion, and though it may not appear very equitable, yet we think it very excusable, to lay every thing that vexes us at the door of the enemy, and beat them for it whether guilty or not. We are a numerous and well disciplined army; we expect every moment to march towards Marshal *Noailles*, and when we have the honour to talk with his troops in the style of *Dettingen*, they will feel to their cost how well we lov'd our old general; and as their black horse paid for the loss of *Clayton*, so their best troops shall be drubb'd again out of pure regret at the losing Field Marshal S—.

It is, Sir, a great work that we are about, we have declared our intention not only to deprive the *French* of *Alsace*, *Lorrain*, *Burgundy*, *Franche Compté*, the three bishopricks, and what they at present possess of the duchy of *Luxemburgh*, but to humble them also, and to restrain their power, within such narrow bounds, as that for the future, they may have enough to do to look to their own affairs, and not have so much time upon their hands, as to busy themselves with their neighbours affairs purely for the sake of occupation. A glorious undertaking if we can compass it: And why should we not, we have here the flower of the *British* and *German* troops, we have the King and Duke at our head, and if we are no longer led by old S—, we can remember the advice and the example he gave us, which is sufficient to furnish us with spirits.

Before I conclude this letter, I must tell you that the hero you have heard so much of, I mean colonel *Mentzel*, is returned from his Hussars out of *Lorrain*, and is to dine this day in this city, the streets are lined with people waiting to see him, the crowd is as great now as it was at *Frankfort*, when he first joined the army of the allies, he is certainly a very gallant man, and an officer of great merit; his inroad into that duchy is a very extraordinary thing, and will be attended

tended in all probability with very happy consequences. He was not sent thither only to alarm the *French*, to squeeze the purses of the Monks, and to enrich his Hussars by a prodigious booty, but to reconnoitre the country, to see the posture of the enemy's affairs, and to make a tryal of the dispositions of the people. He has performed all this very effectually, his penetrating so far as he did, the terror he struck, and his safe retreat, sufficiently demonstrate the possibility of taking quarters in that country, the weakness of the *French*, and the good will of the inhabitants to their old master.

While I am writing a friend of mine has brought me two pieces of news, which are worth your hearing; the first is that the Earl of S—— brought upon himself that coldness, which inclined him at length to lay down his command, by proposing warmer and quicker measures, than other generals thought reasonable. For example, it is said, that after the battle of *Dettingen*, he proposed passing the *Main* immediately, and attacking the *French*, for which he assigned this reason, that the war would be then begun as auxiliaries to the Queen of *Hungary*, whereas if the *French* were suffered to retire, and we followed them into their own country, the thing might seem to have another aspect. His opinion in this respect being rejected, he surmised it seems that there were other officers whose sentiments had greater weight, which chagrined him not a little. It is likewise reported, that he was for our marching directly from hence to *Spire* without waiting for the *Dutch* troops, who in his opinion would join us time enough, after we had pushed Marshal *Noailles* from his strong post; if there be any truth in these notions, we may justly wonder that there should be so active a spirit in a body so much worn with age; and I must likewise observe, that it fully justifies the notion form'd of him by the *French*, who always believed that he was the forwardest among our commanders, in executing as well as concerting schemes for their destruction. His Lordship will return by the way of *Holland*, where he is probably arrived by this time, and where it is thought he will take his leave of the *States-General*, to whom you know he was appointed ambassador extraordinary, and their *High-Mightinesses* have always manifested the utmost esteem for his person.


The other piece of news I have to tell you, is of still greater importance: there arrived here yesterday an express from P. *Charles's* army, who brought what we have so long and so impatiently expected, the news of his having happily pass'd the *Rhine* on the 12th instant, a little above the place where prince *Waldec* had been repuls'd on the 4th. This affair was managed with very great address; his Royal Highness having got a supply of large boats suffered 30 or 40 small ones to fall down the *Rhine*, from whence the *French* were led to imagine, that it was impossible for him to pass over any considerable body of men, either by a bridge, or by open boats. His Royal Highness caus'd great preparations to be made at *Brisac*, where Count *Kevenbuller* assembled near 20,000 men, and gave such orders as induced all who were under his command to believe, that he meant to attempt the passage of the river the very next morning; nay he went so far as to make such dispositions as were most proper for securing his retreat, in case he was repuls'd. In the mean time, Prince *Charles* march'd ten or twelve leagues higher with the rest of the army, depending on the advice given him by Prince *Waldec*, that the place the most proper for passing the river, was over-against little *Landau*, which he accomplish'd with the loss only of 300 men. It is said that the moment the *French* abandoned their redoubts, his Royal Highness wrote a billet of five lines to the King of *Great-Britain*, and sent it by the officer who arrived here yesterday in the evening. I would not render myself accountable for every tittle of this relation, but shall content myself with telling you, that I believe it to be in every respect true. This moment a courier is taking horse, in order to carry the intelligence I send you to *Brussels*, and from thence to *Vienna*. The

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Your most affectionate Friend,

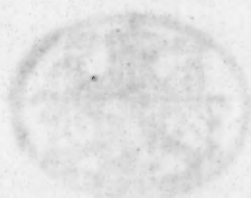
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